

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-18 and 22-25 now stand in the application, new claims 23-25 having been added. Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

The present invention as defined in claim 1 and as shown in Fig. 3 resides in an attachment structure 4 which includes a first part 13 located in the wall of the hearing aid housing and a second part 6 protruding through an aperture 11, 12 in the hearing aid housing wall.

Arndt provides a modular hearing aid having separate microphone, receiver, amplifier and battery modules. The receiver 22, shielded as shown in FIG. 4, is inserted into a resilient rubber sleeve 34. The receiver 22, encased in sleeve 34, is next lowered into a housing 44 (FIG. 5) which forms the outer surface of the receiver module. The receiver module 14, microphone module 16, amplifier module 18 and battery module 20 are connected together as shown in Fig. 1A, and then side plates 240, 242 (Fig. 17) are secured to the sides to complete the hearing aid.

The examiner has identified the tube 80 of Arndt as corresponding to the claimed second part of the attachment structure of claim 1. But the examiner has incorrectly identified the receiver housing 44 as corresponding to the claimed first part of the attachment structure. More particularly, the first part of the attachment structure is described in claim 1 as being located “in said hearing aid housing wall.” The receiver housing 44 is not in said hearing aid housing wall. There are parts of the receiver module 44 which form outer walls of the hearing aid, but there is no part that is in the hearing aid housing wall.

Claims 8 and 22 recite this same distinguishing feature as claim 1.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite that the interchangeable part can be removed without removing any electrical components of the hearing aid. This is not the case with Arndt where the receiver housing 44 (which the examiner has equated with the claimed first part of the attachment structure) cannot be removed without removing the receiver as well.

Regarding the obviousness rejection of claims 5-7 and 15-18 additionally relying on Vignini, the examiner relies on that reference to teach additional subject matter of those claims, but not to teach the features of the independent claims. Accordingly, additional reliance on Vignini does not make up for the deficiencies of Arndt in teaching the subject matter of the parent claims.

For the above reasons, it is submitted that all claims patentably distinguish over the applied art.

The purpose of the present invention is to provide an easily replaceable connection part, in order that a hearing aid can, at a late stage of assembly, be configured optionally for a hook, which has a threaded connection, or for a tube, which is just slipped over a spout.

Such replacement is not a viable procedure with the design of Arndt. Neither has Arndt suggested it, Arndt having only a threaded connection. In Arndt, the threaded spout is integral with the receiver housing, and replacing the connection part would entail disassembly of the receiver housing, unsoldering of the receiver connections and renewal of the receiver fitting.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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